

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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### PRISONERS OF SILENCE.

By MARY ANGELA DICKENS.

Author of "*A Valiant Ignorance*," "*A Mere Cypher*,"  
"*Cross Currents*," etc., etc.

#### CHAPTER IX.

SIR WILLIAM KARSLAKE was still alive; but death stood at his bedside, and with that grim power North Branston closed in a hand-to-hand struggle. Day after day rose to find the object of the combat still hovering on that borderland which lies so close to, and yet so infinitely remote from, the life of every day. Day after day passed; and the advantage was now with one, now with the other, of the combatants. The shadow of a great suspense lay over Hatherleigh Grange. All the afternoon long, carriages stopped at the lodge gates with polite enquiries and condolences from every direction. But Lady Karslake saw nobody; the only visitor from the outside world who crossed the threshold in those days was North Branston.

North Branston grew haggard and worn; the case was a somewhat rare crisis, upon the obscurity of which modern medical science had only recently thrown light. In modern methods—so modern, indeed, as to retain something of the nature of experiment—lay his only chance of success, and his professional enthusiasm was strung up to its intensest pitch. And not only were his mental faculties kept constantly at full stretch. To fit a six mile drive into his round of work twice or even three times in the twenty-four hours; to spend sometimes an hour, sometimes considerably more, in one visit to a single patient, involved a concentration of his other work which told heavily on his physical forces. Leisure and

rest became empty words for him. His meals were uncertain in everything except the haste with which they were eaten; and the quantity of sleep he achieved he himself best knew.

It was generally understood in Dr. Vallotson's household that Sir William Karslake's critical condition created a considerable amount of extra work. But—because constant oral statements make more impression upon the unobservant than unannounced fact—an impression prevailed that it was upon Dr. Vallotson's own shoulders that this extra work fell.

After North Branston's attendance at Hatherleigh had been going on for three days, Dr. Vallotson announced that it was imperatively necessary that he himself should put his own sufferings on one side and attend to the practice.

"Somebody must attend to it, my dear," he assured his wife pompously; "old Mr. Bronson and Mrs. Jones have not been seen for a week. I must go out to-morrow."

The words were spoken in a tone of heroic self-immolation, but the reasons against his going out on the morrow existed solely in his own imagination. He was perfectly restored to health. His gouty foot had regained its normal proportions, though he still elected to clothe it in a boot of portentous size. During the days which followed, Dr. Vallotson seemed little less incessantly employed than was North Branston himself. He was in and out of the house a dozen times a day; the family hours had to be incessantly rearranged that he might "fit in his work;" and North Branston was kept in a constant state of irritation by the difficulty of securing horses for his own use.

"Do you expect me to do my work on foot, sir," demanded Dr. Vallotson, his

small figure dilating with indignant self-importance when North, with the angry urgency of over-pressure, pointed out the difficulties thus thrown in the way, "with my foot in its present condition? Where would you be, I should like to know, if I should have to lie up again? You must arrange your engagements to fit in with mine; that's all I can say."

The current of vigorous movement which was stirring the men of the household had apparently touched Mrs. Vallotson and Constance also. It was as though the cloud which had hung about the house during Dr. Vallotson's illness had broken up into strong electrical disturbances, and by the force of reaction the stillness and monotony of these days had given place to an activity which was their very antithesis.

No longer confined to the house by her husband's demands on her attention, Mrs. Vallotson had thrown herself with almost restless energy into the task of re-introducing Constance to her friends. Day after day she went about with Constance, paying calls, giving and accepting invitations, fulfilling all the engagements that the social life of Alnchester could provide. Day after day saw her with never an unoccupied moment, never a solitary half-hour.

To Constance the change came just at the psychological moment. A few days more of unrelieved domesticity, and eruptions of a more or less natural and unphilosophic character must have ensued. She threw herself into the movement which obviated this disastrous contingency with the vigour of one who sees the first steps to a great end plainly before her. To "go about" was the necessary preliminary to popularity, and popularity was the necessary preliminary to the inauguration of a new era for Alnchester.

That popularity might linger; that she might go about without exciting any conspicuous interest in the Alnchester breast; was a contingency that had not occurred to Alnchester's would-be regenerator. To be received everywhere with a few kindly but absent-minded words, and then to find herself relegated to a subordinate position before one all-absorbing topic of public interest, was by no means what she was prepared for. Graver forebodings as to the nature of the Alnchester intellect than she had hitherto allowed herself to indulge began to fill her mind. Apprehensions that she had hitherto put aside from her as altogether too degrading to the human race began to give her gloomy

moments. And the contempt with which she regarded the topic which thus pre-occupied Alnchester knew no bounds. Some slight expression of her feelings became at last imperative to her.

"I suppose it's quite impossible," she said, "for any one in Alnchester to take an interest in more than one subject at a time. But it makes conversation rather monotonous, mother, don't you think? We've paid three calls this afternoon, and we've talked about nothing but Sir William Karslake and his illness."

Ten days had passed; it was about four o'clock in the afternoon, and Constance and her mother were on their way to pay their fourth and final call for the afternoon. It was growing dusk, and Constance could not see her mother's face as Mrs. Vallotson replied:

"You will probably talk of nothing else at the Bennetts', either; so you'd better make up your mind to it, Constance. Everybody is very much interested in Sir William Karslake."

The statement accurately represented the condition of affairs. Hatherleigh Grange was one of the great places of the neighbourhood, and it had stood empty for nearly a year. "New people" at the Grange would in any case have excited a considerable amount of curiosity. That Sir William Karslake's name was one known in a larger world than that of Alnchester rendered it of no moment whatever, so long as he remained at a distance. But when he became Alnchester property, so to speak, the fact quickened attention as adding lustre to the city. By falling ill with the eyes of the world thus fixed upon him, Sir William Karslake had reached the apex of public interest.

It was with a little impatient sigh that Constance followed her mother into Mrs. Bennett's drawing-room — Mrs. Bennett was the wife of a clerical neighbour — and even as they were received by their hostess, the girl heard the name that was becoming so obnoxious to her, proceeding from a corner of the room where two ladies sat together in such earnest conclave that they could hardly break it off to shake hands with Mrs. Vallotson and her daughter. The conventional greeting was hardly uttered when the younger of these two ladies, a sharp, sawn-faced woman, turned from Constance to Mrs. Vallotson and said eagerly:

"Now I dare say you can tell us, Mrs. Vallotson; your husband was an old friend

of Sir William Karslake's, I understand, and he would know, of course. Did he—Sir William Karslake, I mean—go out to India in sixty or sixty-two?"

Mrs. Vallotson seated herself deliberately, and unloosed her mantle at the throat.

"You seem to have been misinformed, Miss Goode," she said composedly. "My husband only met Sir William Karslake in the course of the last three weeks, and that only in a professional capacity."

Miss Goode's face fell.

"You don't say so!" she said. "Well, really now, that's very odd. How things do get about, to be sure! I do assure you that Dr. Vallotson himself—now, who was it told me that Dr. Vallotson had told them—what was it they said he'd said?"

Miss Goode became temporarily lost in the mazes of her memory, which was, indeed, somewhat overstored with sayings which had been repeated to her. And the word was taken up by Mrs. Bennett, a round, comfortable person, the salt of whose life was gossip.

"But you know of him, Mrs. Vallotson?" she said cheerily. "I dare say you know of him, though you haven't known him personally. They say he was a great anxiety to his father in his young days. Sadly wild, I've heard."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Vallotson. She spoke with a dry indifference, which made Constance mentally congratulate herself on having a mother so superior to the other mothers of Alnchester. And since topics of conversation were more or less subject to the dictation of the doctor's wife, a slight pause ensued. Mrs. Bennett produced a little commonplace from the Alnchester stock, which Mrs. Vallotson received with hard civility. But as far as the other two ladies were concerned, it fell flat. Mrs. Bennett herself was but half-hearted in her support of it, and after a few minutes of lame conversation another pause ensued. It was broken this time by the lady who had been discussing the subject of the hour with Miss Goode when Mrs. Vallotson and her daughter appeared upon the scene. She was a limp lady, with a large and helpless countenance.

"Perhaps Mrs. Vallotson can tell us, at least," she suggested feebly, "how the poor man is to-day—Sir William Karslake, you know. I was told that they expected a crisis of some sort to-day. I was told that somebody said he would be either dead or out of danger before to-night."

"A doctor's wife is the last person in

the world who can give any information as to the condition of his patients," said Mrs. Vallotson.

She rose as she spoke to take leave.

"I assure you, Mrs. Elliott, I know no more on the subject than you do."

A passing wonder crossed Constance's mind, as to how it was that her mother knew even so much of Sir William Karslake's condition as her words seemed to imply. Some testy words of Dr. Vallotson's had put Constance herself into possession of the fact which Mrs. Elliott had stated with so much melancholy satisfaction and foreboding. And it had annoyed the girl more than once during the afternoon, to feel that she herself was not wholly untouched by the prevailing epidemic, inasmuch as she found herself dwelling now and again on the thought of the crisis that was coming and going, while the man who was passing through it was being gossiped about and discussed. But she knew that her mother had not heard Dr. Vallotson's words; she knew that she never enquired after any of the patients. And she had supposed that her mother knew nothing of what the day held for the inmates of Hatherleigh Grange.

It was late when they left Mrs. Bennett's house, but to-night Mrs. Vallotson seemed to be in no hurry to get home. She walked slowly, and when they had nearly reached their own house, a small piece of shopping that she wanted to do occurred to her, and she went back to the town—making Constance accompany her—to accomplish it. It added half an hour's walk to an afternoon that had already contained a good deal of exercise; and when they finally turned into their own road again for the second time, Constance was tired out. Her mother must be very strong, she thought to herself, to show no sign whatever of fatigue. Mrs. Vallotson was walking slowly, it was true, but it was with the dilatoriness of a woman who is in no haste to reach home and rest. To Constance, upon whose nerves the idea of Sir William Karslake and the crisis which she knew must now be over, either for good or ill, had rather fastened, the very tardiness of her mother's step was an added weariness. North would be back from Hatherleigh by this time, the girl said to herself, and she really would like to know—though it was very foolish of her, she told herself—whether the stupid man were alive or dead.

She followed her mother quickly into the hall.

"It's late, Constance," said her mother. "Go and get ready quickly, or you'll be late for dinner."

Constance hesitated for an instant. There was a ring of command in Mrs. Vallotson's voice, and habit prevailed over desire. After all, she could hardly have explained her wish to see North Branston, which was, indeed, shrivelling into nothingness now that it was possible to gratify it.

"Very well, mother," she said, and she turned and went away up the stairs.

Mrs. Vallotson stood at the foot, and watched her out of sight. Then she, too, turned and went down the passage towards North Branston's consulting-room. The door was ajar; and as she drew nearer North Branston's voice became audible—North Branston's voice, confident, satisfied, elated, as it had never sounded in that house before.

"He'll do," he said. "There's no fear now. It couldn't have gone better. But, by Jove! Vallotson, six hours ago I thought I was beaten."

Mrs. Vallotson had stopped suddenly. She put out one hand towards the wall of the passage as if to steady herself. Then she turned, and retraced her steps. She went up the stairs to her own room, and shut the door.

#### CHAPTER X

"WHERE is my mother, Sarah?"

It was about ten o'clock on a bright, frosty November morning three weeks later. Constance had come leisurely out of her room, dressed for walking, and had addressed the question to the housemaid.

"Mistress is in the store-room, miss," was the answer.

With that air of unhurried serenity pervading her small person, which is the result of a consciously judicious portioning out of time to philosophic ends, Constance pursued her way downstairs. She went on to the back premises, and pushed open a half-closed door.

"I'm going now, mother," she said.

It was a large room, lighted only by one small and heavily barred window; and in spite of the scrupulous cleanliness and neatness of all its arrangements, it struck chill and gloomy by comparison with the brightness of the passage, along which the winter sunshine lay in ruddy bars. Occupied with the contents of one of the cupboards, stood Mrs. Vallotson, alone. She turned her head slowly as Constance spoke.

"Very well," she said. "To the Bryanstones' is it?"

There was a subtle suggestion about Mrs. Vallotson's voice which is only to be described as a suggestion of disuse; it was like a voice influenced by long intervals of total silence. Its tone, however, was not one calculated to arrest the attention of the inaugurator of a new era.

Constance did not come into the room. She stood in the doorway, her girlish, daintily dressed figure, as it caught some of the sunshine behind her, contrasting sharply with the sombre stillness of the room before her.

"No, mother," she said; "to the Eliots'. I'm going for a walk with Kitty, and then we are going to read together. I'm going to tea with the Bryanstones this afternoon. I told you of the engagement two days ago."

There was a strong touch of the condescension of the instructor in the clear young voice, as Constance uttered her explanation; her last words were, further, just tinged with a certain lofty consciousness of her mother's forgetfulness; and the deference which would have subdued the whole, three weeks before, was only very faintly represented. The tone was the outcome of the independence to which the girl's words witnessed.

That independence was a development of the past three weeks, which had seemed to the future regenerator of Alncester so perfectly desirable and natural, that it never occurred to her to consider that it had come about with rather untrustworthy rapidity.

Mrs. Vallotson had apparently fulfilled all the social duties demanded of her for the present, and her energy in that direction seemed to have been followed by a reaction in which she was even disinclined for society; but she had placed no obstacles in the way of any visits to her contemporaries, which Constance liked to pay by herself. She seemed, on the contrary, desirous that the girl should go out. Constance went out accordingly with assiduity, preparing her ground over afternoon teas, country walks, and German readings; and winning a half-unwilling, half-admiring recognition from the girls, who thought her "dreadfully clever."

There was a moment's pause now before Mrs. Vallotson answered her. Then she said briefly, "Very well!" and turned back to her cupboard.

"Good - bye, mother," said the girl brightly.



"Good-bye, child."

Mrs. Vallotson did not turn round. She was counting table-linen, and she continued her work in the same mechanically concentrated manner after her daughter had gone.

Another hour had passed when she came out of the store-room, locking the door behind her, and went into the dining-room. She was looking cold and numb, but she seemed to be hardly conscious of the fact, for she did not approach the fire. She seated herself by the table, and took some needlework from a basket.

It had been remarked on more than one occasion lately—remarked with some unconscious satisfaction by those female friends who had been wont secretly to consider that the well set-up and well-preserved doctor's wife looked too young for her years—that Mrs. Vallotson was ageing. She seemed, indeed, to have taken one of those strides forward by which some women advance in life. She had become very thin; her tall figure had lost its mature substantiality, and had become gaunt; wrinkles had developed about her eyes, and her eyes themselves had a sunken appearance; her hair, hitherto untouched by the hand of time, was growing grey about the temples—growing grey and greyer, as it seemed, from day to day. Sitting there now in the quiet, dull dining-room, with the winter daylight full on her face, the pinched, blue look of cold about her seemed to accentuate all these signs of age, and she looked in her sombre stillness like a woman twenty years her senior.

Nearly two hours had gone by, and except for the mechanical movement of her fingers she had hardly stirred, when the door opened. She glanced up instinctively. The new-comer was North Branston, and as her eyes fell upon him, an added shade of stillness fell upon her face. She looked back at her work in silence.

North Branston was looking rather pre-occupied, and all the more disagreeable characteristics of his ordinary expression seemed to be in abeyance for the time being. He walked up to the fireplace, and stood with his back to it, looking down thoughtfully at the carpet. Mrs. Vallotson worked on without a word.

"Adelaide!" he began. He spoke abruptly, but it was the abruptness of constraint rather than antagonism. "You came to a decision a few weeks ago rather prematurely."

Mrs. Vallotson's fingers continued to move slowly but unceasingly, and there was a perceptible pause before she said:

"What do you mean?"

North Branston changed his position. He folded his arms and leaned his shoulder against a corner of the mantelpiece.

"As to calling on the Karlsakes," he said. "I dare say your principle as to the country people is all right in itself. I don't profess to understand these things. But I don't see the necessity for going out of your way to be uncivil."

He paused, but Mrs. Vallotson did not speak, and after a minute he resumed in a voice touched—involuntarily, apparently—with its customary dry antagonism:

"I suppose it is considered uncivil when one woman expresses a wish to make the acquaintance of another woman, and that other woman—there being nothing against it but her own will—declines to take the necessary step! At any rate, Adelaide, I think it right that you should know that Lady Karlake has more than once expressed a hope that you will call upon her."

He made this simple masculine deduction and uttered his bold statement, with a man's total absence of comprehension of the social compulsion they contained. They had evidently been for him rather a declaration than an argument.

"Is Sir William Karlake quite well again?"

The words came from Mrs. Vallotson abruptly, and she looked up for the first time.

"He has quite recovered from his late attack."

"Does he go out?"

"He will go out if the weather keeps dry—yes."

North's replies had been uttered drily and grimly. He paused a moment after uttering his last sentence, his brow darkening. Then he said abruptly:

"Of course there is no more that I can say on the subject. I shan't attempt to argue the point. I've told you how the facts stand, and it's for you to decide upon your course of action. I shan't be in until dinner-time."

He strode across the room as he spoke, and disappeared.

When Mrs. Vallotson sat down to lunch with her husband and daughter, the numbed look of cold had passed away from her face, and with it there seemed to have gone something of that set repression which had settled upon her features so gradually as to be unnoticeable. Her colouring was deeper than it had been for days. She spoke little throughout the meal, but that

little was sharp, and to the point. Luncheon was nearly over when she said abruptly:

"Where is North this afternoon, Robert?"

"Where is North?" returned Dr. Vallotson. "He has gone out to Arlcote. He is going to take Royston and Petershill on his way back. If he had listened to me, he would have gone to Hatherleigh. Very inattentive, I consider him! Very inattentive. Did you want the carriage, may I ask, my love?"

"Yes!" said Mrs. Vallotson slowly.

"Can I have it?"

Dr. Vallotson pursed up his lips and pondered importantly.

"Well," he said, "I really hardly know what to say! It isn't—I must own that it's rather inconvenient this—where did you—now where were you thinking of going, my dear?"

"I want to go to Hatherleigh, to call on Lady Karslake."

Dr. Vallotson drew himself back in his chair with a movement which was almost a jump of delight, and the pompous uncertainty of his expression melted in an instant into a boundless satisfaction.

"To Hatherleigh?" he said. "My love, to be sure! At what time, now—at what time shall I tell James to be ready? To call on Lady Karslake? Quite so. Quite so. And Connie is going with you, of course. Quite so."

He uttered the last words in a tone of radiant and condescending comprehension as of a man who sees and deigns to recognise a scheme perfect at all points. As he spoke them Constance looked up quickly, but before she could speak Mrs. Vallotson said decidedly, and rather harshly:

"No, Constance is not going." She stopped, and then added, addressing the girl but not looking at her: "You've got something to do this afternoon, haven't you, child?"

"I'm going to tea with the Bryanstones, mother."

"The Bryanstones?" began Dr. Vallotson fussily. "Surely the Bryanstones can be put off, my dear. Surely you had better—"

"There is no reason why they should be put off." Mrs. Vallotson had risen, and her tone was conclusive. "Tell James to be ready at half-past three, Robert."

## THE BRITISH STANDING ARMY.

It is to be feared that we, as a people, are too much given to take things for granted; to accept our national institutions

as they stand without enquiring as to how they arose, grew, and became what they are. We have our form of government, our navy, our army, our police, but we find them what they are, and are too often content to make that the end of our information about them, and do not take the trouble ourselves to seek out their origin and growth. Perhaps it is owing to this fact that until now—late in the nineteenth century—has been left the publication of the first volume of the first consecutive and exhaustive history of our Standing Army.\*

The volume, which only carries the history up to the year 1700, falls naturally into three divisions: the rise of the Standing Army and its progress until 1688; the wars in Ireland and Flanders; and lastly, chapters on Arms and Accoutrements, Clothing and Equipment, Drills and Exercises, Punishments, and other matters relating to the internal direction of a military force.

It was on the fourteenth of February, 1661, that the seeds of the British Army—to the number of one hundred and seventy troopers, and between nine hundred and a thousand infantry—were collected on Tower Hill. These soldiers were part of the army which, under General Monck, had played so important a part in the Restoration to the throne of King Charles the Second. As they were there assembled, four Commissioners drove up to them, informed them that they were commissioned to thank them for their past services, to promise them their arrears of pay, and to enlist them into the King's own service. The troops were thereupon disbanded, and immediately afterwards re-enlisted, and became the "Lord General's Regiment of Foot Guards," and the "Lord General's Troop of Guards"—the Lord General being added by way of compliment to Monck. The regiment of foot was the foundation of the Coldstream Guards—Monck's army, in his march from Scotland, having halted at the border town of Coldstream, and having from this received the nickname of "Coldstreamers."

Although the "Coldstreamers" were thus the first regiment really enlisted into the Standing Army, there was a regiment already existing which had undoubted rights to priority. This was formed of Englishmen who had followed the Stuarts into exile, and who had been formed into six corps when Charles

\* The "History of the British Standing Army," by Colonel Clifford Walton, C.B., Assistant Adjutant-General. (Harrison & Sons.)

and his brother James were fighting for France against the Spanish. After the Restoration these six corps were amalgamated and sent to Dunquerque under Lord Wentworth, and a second battalion formed in England. The two battalions were further amalgamated in 1665, and as the King's Own Guards, or First Foot Guards, this regiment took precedence, as it still does, of the Lord General's or Coldstream Regiment. In the same way the Lord General's Troop of Guards had to give way to a number of Royalist gentlemen, who had served as a body-guard to the King during the civil war; had followed him abroad; and at the Restoration became the King's Own or First Troop, and the Duke of York's or Second Troop, of the regiment still famous as the Life Guards. Afterwards Monck's became the Second, and the Duke of York's the Third Troop. The Royal Horse Guards were, really, the survival of another Puritan regiment, Colonel Unton Cook's, which was disbanded in December, 1660, and re-established on the sixteenth of February, 1661, under the title of the Royal Regiment of Horse; and it still takes precedence next to the Life Guards as the Royal Horse Guards Blue.

To return to the infantry. At the Restoration a regiment of Scottish mercenaries was in French employ, and Charles, using as a pretext a rising of religious fanatics, demanded that this regiment should return to the service of its own sovereign. The regiment, three thousand strong, was brought to England, and although it again returned to France, and served the French King for sixteen years, it "takes rank in the British army from the year 1661, as the First or Royal Regiment of Foot." Charles, having started his army, was not content with what he had but was on the outlook for adding more regiments, and when Tangier was ceded to England by Portugal, he brought forward the need of additional troops for a garrison as an excuse. A regiment of foot and a troop of horse were accordingly raised by the Earl of Peterborough, and shipped off to Tangier. The infantry, on returning from Tangier in 1684, was termed "Our Most Dear Consort the Queen's Regiment of Foot," and is known at the present day as the Second or Queen's Regiment of Foot. The troop of horse raised at the same time, together with three more raised later for the same purpose, became the King's Own or Royal Regiment of Dragoons, and still appears in the Army List as the First Royal Dragoons.

The next chance for a new regiment appeared in 1665, when war broke out with the Dutch. In the Dutch service was a regiment of Englishmen, and Charles, perceiving the advantage of obtaining a compact body of veterans, demanded their return home. On their return they were naturally termed the Holland Regiment, but became in time the Third Foot, or the Buffs. By this time Charles had an army as strong as that of the United States of America previous to the civil war, and in addition to the three regiments of cavalry and five of infantry there were many independent companies and troops.

Dragoons were the next to be raised—the term dragoon being most probably derived from a weapon, a dragon, which was a large-bore flint-lock carbine, very short in the barrel—the dragoons originally being simply mounted foot-soldiers, able to act either as cavalry or infantry. The regiment which was raised for Tangier, and which afterwards became the First Dragoons, was not converted into dragoons until 1684; so that a regiment of Scots Dragoons, now known as the Scots Greys, was the first dragoon regiment in the English army, although the Tangier regiment takes precedence of them.

In the meantime at Tangier British soldiers were defending the British fortress against the Moors, who were striving their utmost to drive them out of the place. The "defences consisted of a series of outworks, so placed as to form a complete outer line of forts within musquet shot of each other, and they were connected by ditches, and in some places by palisades, the whole being three miles in compass on the land side." Around the fort the fight waged furiously—attacks and sallies, mines and counter-mines, and hand-to-hand encounters. Of the defence of one small redoubt and fort we have an account which reads like some deed of heroism of the Mutiny days. In the fort were twenty-eight men and a sergeant, in the redoubt twelve men and a sergeant, and against them the whole fury of the Moors was concentrated. In the fort the English defended themselves until the roof gave way, then they retreated to the tower and blew up the rest of the house with the men upon it. For another hour the little party defended itself, and then man after man dropped; hope of relief from the Lines gave place to certainty of death; yet still did the sergeant encourage his men, still did the soldiers stand by their sergeant. Seven men only,

besides the sergeant, were left when a corner of the building gave way, and the tired Englishmen saw themselves exposed to the open attacks of those whom they had so long defied. They resolved to take no quarter, and they made a rush for their lives. One or two escaped, but the gallant sergeant did not live to tell the tale of his own doings."

The redoubt was defended with equal bravery, and when all hope was gone the remnant of the little party determined to try and fight their way to the Lines. The sergeant remained behind, prepared a train, and blew up the redoubt and some forty of his foes. These and other actions of a like kind inspired the Moors with a lively sense of English courage, and after a new regiment had been raised—the Fourth Regiment of Foot—a truce was arranged, in the midst of which the Government determined to abandon Tangier, and in 1684 the troops returned home.

When James the Second came to the throne, he set to work to remedy a fault in his army which had been severely felt at Tangier—the want of sufficient cavalry—and in the first year of his reign six regiments of horse were raised, which now exist as the First to the Sixth Dragoon Guards. Of these the First and Second were raised in London, the Fourth—it does not appear whence the Third came—in the Midland Counties, and the Fifth on the borders of Wales. The Sixth was composed of various independent troops which were raised against Monmouth, formed into the "Queen Dowager's Horse." This regiment is now known as the Carabineers. This name was not given it until William the Third made a Carabineer regiment of it—the troopers being armed with rifled carabines instead of smooth-bore musketoons. At the same time two regiments of Dragoons were raised—the Queen's, recruited in Middlesex, which now bears the title of the Third, or King's Own, Dragoons; and the Princess Anne of Denmark's Regiment, recruited in Somersetshire and the West Country, now ranking as the Fourth Dragoons. In 1685 were added also nine regiments of infantry. Amongst these was one which had the peculiarity, for those days, of numbering in its ranks no pikemen, all the men being armed with fusils, which gave to the regiment the name of Fusiliers. This regiment exists at present as the Seventh Royal Fusiliers. The remaining regiments now rank from the Eighth to the

Fifteenth of the line; the Midland Counties supplying the Eighth and Tenth; Gloucestershire the Ninth; North Devonshire the Eleventh; East Suffolk the Twelfth; the Thirteenth was recruited in Buckinghamshire; the Fourteenth in Kent, and the Fifteenth in Nottinghamshire; while in the following year the Scots Foot Guards were added to the English establishment. At the same time Camps of Instruction were formed; Brigades and Divisions formed; a drill book was issued; and the "Articles of War" were rendered more distinct and more comprehensive." And in the last year of King James's reign two more regiments were added—the Sixteenth and the Seventeenth, both of which were raised in Middlesex.

Of the second part of Colonel Walton's book, which deals with the wars in Ireland and Flanders, we need not say much, for as wars they are to be found described in any English history, but inasmuch as new regiments were added from time to time, they are to the point. Amongst these new regiments were the Inniskilling Dragoons, and the Fifth Royal Irish Dragoons. The Inniskillingers, to whom William was indebted for keeping the enemy in check while an army was being raised in England, also raised a regiment of infantry, which is now the Twenty-seventh Regiment. These Irish troops soon showed themselves, as they have done ever since, amongst the best troops in the British Army. Other foot regiments were the Royal Regiment of Ireland, now the Eighteenth Royal Irish; the Twentieth, Twenty-second, Twenty-third, and Twenty-fourth; and the Nineteenth, which had been formed by volunteers who had joined the Prince's standard on his landing. The Seventh Dragoon Guards were formed in like fashion.

The story of the death of General Schomberg, which took place at the Battle of the Boyne, is very curious.

On the Boyne was a small hamlet, Old-bridge, which had been abandoned by the villagers at the first sign of a battle; the men, all but one poor deformed, lame man, or "bokkha," having joined James's army.

"This bokkha refused to quit the place; he had over his turf-hearth an old duck-gun, and, damning the heretics who were coming to lay waste his home, he swore that he would not budge until he had had a shot with his family gun at the bloody-minded Prince of Orange. On the morning of the battle, when the Protestant forces began to move, the bokkha concealed him-



self in a double ditch close to the Old-bridge ford, so as to be covered from the shot of both friend and foe. Looking sharply about from his hiding-place, he soon made out the principal personages in the enemy's army, and resolved to reserve his fire until these big game came within range. Thus biding his time, he at length viewed the charge of Hamilton's and Parker's Horse, the wavering of the French refugees, the fall of Caillemote—and he perceived with joy a horseman ride fast down to the river wearing a coat richly laced, an embroidered sword-belt, a sash of golden network, and many plumes in his hat. This was the very man he had so long waited for; surely this must be the Prince, and he was about to ride close by his hiding-place. The determined bokkha kept his eyes steadfastly on this officer, and when he saw him point the soldiers towards his now empty, ruined home, he decided that this man, even if he were not the Prince—and he seemed too old to be so—would at all events be a worthy sacrifice to his outraged Penates. He examined the priming of his duck-gun and made ready. Chance favoured him, for at this moment the officer turned in his saddle to speak to the soldiers, and his horse, availing himself of the distraction, tugged at the reins and stooped for a good long drink. Before the rider could drag his horse's head up again, the bokkha found time for a deliberate aim: the duck-gun was discharged, and the great General Schomberg fell to speak no more."

In Flanders, among the regiments which made their first appearance was the Twenty-first Foot, better known as the Scots Fusiliers, and the Twenty-sixth Cameronian, which regiment derived its name from the religious sect from which it was originally recruited. About the same time several independent Scotch companies were embodied into a regiment, and they became many years later the Ninety-fourth Regiment.

Leaving the history of this rise of the army and the enlistment of the various regiments, we come to the last division of the book—that dealing with the armament, equipment, and internal arrangements of the army, which is perhaps the most interesting part of the narrative. Amongst the arms now obsolete, which formed a large part of the infantry equipment in the days when the army was started, was the pike, which was in the form of a spear, with a flat and pointed head, mounted on a staff from thirteen to eighteen feet long.

The firearm in general use at the time was the matchlock. What would a Sergeant-Major of the present day, with his men armed with the Magazine Rifle, think of such a weapon as this: "Attached to the lock of this musquet was a pan, also a cock the hammer of which was somewhat in the form of a bird's, serpent's, or dog's head; this head was split, and a screw compressed or eased the slits. The piece being loaded first with powder and then with ball, some powder was poured into the pan; the pan was then shut to keep this 'priming' from dropping out, and to keep it dry. When the soldier wished to fire, he fastened his burning match into the slit of the cock, opened the pan, looked to his priming, presented, and pulled the trigger; the match, falling into the powder in the pan, fired it. Between the pan and the breech of the barrel communication was established by means of a small hole; when the piece was being loaded, the grains of powder were naturally rammed and shaken down close to this hole, and when priming, the soldier took care to perfect the communication of the powder in the pan with that in the barrel; thus the explosion in the pan caused the ignition of the charge."

These musquets were gradually superseded by the fusil, in which a flint and steel took the place of the match. The fusil was also provided—as are modern rifles—with a sling. Carbines also—surprising though it may seem to find rifled weapons in use so early—were used in the cavalry; carbine meaning a gun that is rifle, being derived from the French carbine; carabiner, the verb, meaning to rifle, spoken of a gun-barrel. Of course, these antiquated guns were constantly being improved—even as are the finished weapons of the present day—and cartridges in the course of time came into use. The first cartridge was "a ready-made charge. A piece of stiff paper being rolled on a roller into a cylinder of the size of the calibre of the musquet, a separation was made with a wad in the middle; the larger part was then filled with powder, the other held the bullet; and the two ends were firmly closed up. When loading, the soldier bit off the end of the powder partition, so as to permit of the communication of the powder in the breech with the priming." Hand grenades were another offensive weapon of the period. They were "small shells of iron of from one to two inches in diameter, filled with powder, and having a touch hole into which was inserted a wooden tube filled with a fuse

compounded of fine powder tempered with charcoal dust. The grenadier having quickened the fuse from his lighted match, threw the grenade with the hand; such missiles falling thickly, and bursting amongst knots of the enemy, caused not only wounds but possibly a confusion that might be turned to advantage by the attacking party." Sometimes grenades were made of pasteboard, wood, or tin, and in this case they were intended to set fire to works, or to throw light on the enemy.

As to the uniform of the army, the Royal Livery or Uniform of England had always been red, and the Royal bodyguard, even in the time of Henry the Eighth, was clothed in scarlet cloth. Infantry soldiers in the time of Elizabeth "had overcoats or cassocks of some motley or other sad green colour, or russet," but under this they wore a doublet which most often was red. Of course in the Commonwealth army dull colours were the general wear, but scarlet reappeared at the Restoration. Almost all the new regiments took the national colour for their uniform, for, being permanent troops and forming part of the Royal Standing Army, they had, as such, a right to the Royal Livery; but a few line regiments—amongst them the Sixteenth, Twenty-third, and Twenty-fourth—wore blue coats. The changes in shape and cut of coats, hats, boots, and other military equipment, are too many to be enumerated here, but one point worthy of comment is the mode of the supply of clothing to the troops, which, objectionable though it was, continued to quite a recent date. "A certain portion of the daily pay of a soldier was set apart for subsistence. The remainder over and above the subsistence was termed the off-reckonings. Out of the off-reckonings was deducted one shilling in the pound on the whole pay, besides one day's pay per annum, for Chelsea Hospital and other purposes. . . . The net off-reckonings were passed over to the Colonels, and out of them the Colonel was to clothe his regiment." Now though these net off-reckonings were but barely sufficient to cover the cost of clothing, a very considerable income—from two hundred to six hundred pounds a year—was screwed out of them by the Colonels. "Some Colonels were not satisfied with misappropriating the off-reckonings, but even trenched largely on the soldiers' subsistence money," the Colonels having the power of appointing the regimental agent through whose hands all the cash transactions passed, and of making all the contracts.

"Sometimes the contractors would offer a Colonel a direct bribe of a lump sum, reaching even to as much as six hundred pounds for the year. . . . Sometimes the bribe took the form of a percentage on the contract. Sometimes the fraud was perpetrated by the simple plan of accepting a contract with nominal prices higher than the actual prices to be paid."

What is termed the Regimental Economy was much the same from 1660 to 1700 as at the present time, though some ranks and duties were different. The Colonel was the chief of a regiment, and he was responsible for the whole discipline and economy of the corps under his command. The Major of the period had to perform duties which were a combination of those now performed by both Major and Serjeant-Major. "He was the medium of communication betwixt the Colonel and the regiment; he received and distributed into their proper channel all orders, detached parties and guards, and visited and inspected the latter; he was to drill and exercise the regiment, to correct errors or disorder on parade or on the march, and to see that the men had their quarters in due order and were properly treated." The Major and the Colonel, in addition to those ranks, also generally commanded a company, and drew, in addition to their pay as Colonel and Major, pay as Captains. Captains and Subalterns existed as at this day, while a rank which has ceased to exist was that of Captain-Lieutenant which, when the Colonel held a company, was the title of the senior Lieutenant who acted for him as Captain of it. In the same way the Lieutenant-Colonel and the Major, when they held companies, were represented by the two next senior Lieutenants. Cornets and Ensigns, together with a sub-grade of Cornet, a Guidon, which existed in the Life Guards alone, have disappeared. Although the theory was that promotion was by selection guided by merit, purchase played a large part in it. Amongst the prices paid were in 1681, five thousand one hundred pounds for a colonelcy in the Foot Guards; 1684, one thousand six hundred pounds for the captaincy of a troop of Horse; while between 1680 and 1685 as much as six thousand pounds was paid for a Captain's commission, and two thousand one hundred pounds for a Cornetcy. Exchanges of officers from one corps to another were permitted in the seventeenth century.

The Standing Army has from its earliest days been recruited by voluntary enlist-

ment, and the recruiting party with its gay ribbons and drummers and fifers was the stock method of recruiting practised. "It was termed recruiting by the 'Beat of Drum,' and the Warrant authorising any one to recruit in this manner was styled 'Beating Orders.'" This voluntary enlistment served very well for some time, but it failed at length, and in Scotland, when four years of war had drained her of her surplus population, in 1694 resort was had for a period to conscription and pressing. Pressing for the army in England was illegal, and this is how it was done: "A man named Tooley was found to be keeping a house in Holborn, apparently legalised as a sort of house of detention for sailors suspected of intended desertion, but which was used far more for a regular trade in recruits for the Army. It must be premised . . . that Captains of Troops and Companies could draw no pay for men whose places in the ranks were vacant on the days of muster, and that while they had a great pecuniary interest in vacancies between the periods of muster, they had thus an even greater interest in completing their quota against these periods." He could afford to pay as much as one or two pounds a head to crimps, and thus Tooley flourished. "Every reader has doubtless heard of the 'King's Shilling.' This shilling was one day's pay, the acceptance of which by a soldier was necessary to substantiate in the eye of the law any charge of desertion; for the best proof of a man's enlistment was to be found in the fact of his having drawn pay. The great object then of either recruiting sergeant or crimp was to get a man to accept a shilling . . . and in a moment the free citizen had rendered himself amenable to the necessarily harshest of penal codes, martial law. Mr. Tooley and his servants were adepts at this game of passing the shilling. Sometimes a shilling was slipped into a man's pocket without his knowledge. Mr. Tooley's agent then got into conversation with him at an alehouse, or other place of public resort, and by-and-by declared him to be enlisted; the victim might assert that he could easily prove that the story of his taking the shilling was false, for that he had only a few pence in his pocket; a constable was called and his pockets were searched, and of course the shilling produced therefrom to his unutterable confusion and discredit, and off he went to Mr. Tooley's in Holborn. Giving a man the shilling while drunk, and suffering him

to get sober at Mr. Tooley's, was a common thing. Occasionally, when Mr. Tooley's agents were quite sure of the lookers on, if the victim made too much fuss over taking his shilling, he was simply held down, gagged, and tied, and then the money being forced into his pocket, he was carried off to Holborn." At first there was no limit of service in our army, and no rule of age for recruits.

The Drill of the period must have been cumbersome and slow to learn. In the "Posture or Exercise for the Pike" there are no fewer than thirty-five words of command, while in the "Posture or Exercise for the Musquet" the words of command run up, in the case of the matchlock, to thirty-six, amongst them being the quaint ones of "Handle your match," "Blow your match," "Cock and try your match," "Take the wad from your hats."

Perhaps the greatest differences between our days and the early days of the army, are the punishments meted out to our soldiers, which were in the olden times harsh in the extreme. It was imperative "that punishments should be deterrent in their severity, and that the faintest symptom of insubordination should be visited with penalties apparently disproportionate to offences trivial in themselves but weighty in the possible sequel." It was also necessary that they should be prompt in execution. Soon after the establishment of the Standing Army all offenders were tried by regimental Courts-martial, from which an appeal lay to the General Court-martial. As at present the junior officer of the Court gave his opinion first, and the senior officer last. The sentence was carried by the majority of votes, the President having the casting vote. A later modification was that in death sentences the majority was not to be less than nine out of thirteen. After the Revolution it was customary for all death sentences to be sent up for approval by the General Commanding-in-Chief, and later on it was laid down that all such sentences required the approval of the sovereign before being carried into effect. Shooting was the ordinary manner of carrying out the death penalty, but in baser crimes hanging was resorted to. Burning with fire at the stake was the most ignominious mode of military sentence of death, and two instances of this occurred in Flanders in King William's reign. The lash in various forms was, of course, the principal mode of punishment. Mutilation and branding were also in vogue at this period,

and finally we come to the only military punishments which survive, namely, imprisonment and punishment drill. The Stocks and the Wooden Horse were also common punishments in the early days of the army. The crimes which were punishable in the early days of the army were no fewer than fifty in number, beginning with mutiny and ending with uncleanness of accoutrements.

Space does not admit of telling of the Military Honours and Rewards during this period; nor of the Staff and Field Administration of the army, together with the Medical and Religious Administration, but enough is here set forth to show that the volume treats exhaustively of its subject, and will well repay perusal by those who take an interest in one of our foremost institutions—our Standing Army.

### MOON MYTHS.

THE moon has been worshipped among nearly all the nations of the world from time immemorial; indeed, her cult has been asserted to be much older-established than sun-worship. Samoyedes and the people of Borneo adore her yet, and the Caribs come from their homes at new moon, and raise a great cry in her honour. Swart Nubians rejoiced in the new moon's rising just as did the cultured Greeks, who pictured her as a wild huntress, more girl than woman, with a cold breast unsunned by love for any man, mortal or demigod, and sweet, cold lips that have never kissed any mouth but Endymion's, asleep on the mountains. Moslems clap their hands at the sight of the new moon; the Finnish girl, Christian though she be, drops a curtsey and a word of greeting to Kun, as his silver mask shines whitely over her; the Peruvian peasant hurries home out of the cold moonshine, afraid of the stern eyes of Mama Quilla; and the Egyptian fellah lounges across the sands where the Sphinx's shadow lies black at his feet with a prayer on his lips or in his heart to Thoth—Thoth, the Master of Wisdom, the Lord of the Ibis, in whose absence the fair land of Khem has been brought down very low. Swabian girls still refuse to spin by moonlight, "lest they should anger Her," they say vaguely; and in Germany children firmly believe in Horsel or Holda, whose boat is the moon, whose flower is the flax, and whose delight it is to reward industrious little maidens. Dante makes the man in the moon Cain;

in Egypt he is Horus, held to the breast of Isis, his mother and the moon; in France he is Judas; and in some parts of England the fancy obtains that he is a man who broke the Sabbath by gathering sticks from a neighbour's forest-land. In Rantum the man in the moon is a giant, who, at flowing tide, stoops to pour water on the earth, and at ebb-tide stands upright, in order that the waters may subside. Devonshire folk say that the figure to be seen in the moon is that of a dog. Other people say that it is Endymion, or Isaac bearing on his back a burden of wood for his own sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Danes fancied that the moon is a cheese made from the milk that has run out from the Milky Way. Pearls and all other white stones, except diamonds, are in sympathy with the moon, according to the Rosicrucians, and should be worn on Mondays. A curious Eastern fancy is that the figure in the moon is that of the pattern wife, Ina, who weaves the clouds into white cloth; and who, after the lapse of many years, sent her mortal husband back to earth by the rainbow bridge in order that death might not defile her heavenly home. The cat and the panther are both connected with the moon in some vague and occult fashion; indeed, in Australia, the moon is represented as a native cat, and also in Egypt. In China the Celestials say that there is a frog in the moon, a metamorphosed beauty, called Chango, who drank the liquor of immortality, and was caught up to the moon, where she was changed into her present form.

### "THE LIFE OF THE PARTY."

#### A COMPLETE STORY.

"I CALL it too bad of the manager!" said Mrs. Trefusis with warmth. "He knew I particularly wished to sit next the Vernons at the table d'hôte, and now he has changed their places to the other table!"

"What has he done that for?" asked Mrs. Lambert languidly.

"To make himself disagreeable, I should think," responded the irate lady. "He muttered something about 'new arrivals,' and 'arranging the tables.' New arrivals, indeed! Why should he want to put them next to me? And one never knows whom one may meet in these Riviera places."

"That is true," murmured Miss Sparks beneath her breath. "One is forced to put up with decidedly second-rate people very often."



"I dare say they will be gamblers from Monte Carlo, or something of that sort," continued Mrs. Trefusis. "Well, anyhow, I don't mean to have anything to do with them. One isn't obliged to be pleasant to people one doesn't like."

"Certainly not," said Miss Sparks sweetly.

We were all sitting in the hall of the "Hôtel Beau Rivage" at St. Antoine, waiting for dinner. The "Beau Rivage" is a small and—we flatter ourselves—a particularly select hotel, patronised almost exclusively by our own countrymen; or rather, I should perhaps say, our own countrywomen, for the sterner sex were, as a rule, conspicuous by their absence. Also, as a rule, we had arrived at a time of life when we liked to be comfortable, and were by no means unduly set upon excursions, or such-like festivities. A gentle stroll in the morning, when our respective apartments were in the hands of the chambermaids; a retirement to the said apartments after lunch "to write letters"; then another stroll, or a lounge in the garden to listen to the band; dinner, and "early to bed;" was a programme that suited a good many of our party admirably. I don't say the younger members may not have found it a little dull; but, dear me! we didn't think it necessary to lay ourselves out for their amusement. They must do as their elders did. The manager made us very comfortable, and only young and ardent spirits, like pretty Mrs. Trefusis, rebelled against his autocratic rule.

But I am wandering from the party gathered in the hall. The grievance was discussed with much animation. Most of us sympathised with the victim of the manager's misdirected zeal; but I am bound to say that the absent autocrat would have had many supporters, had not his cause been championed by that unpopular spinster, Miss Sparks.

"I do pity Miss Long for being companion to that crabbed old thing," whispered a pretty girl to her bosom friend. "She has been confiding her woes to me. It is so funny; because, when we were here last winter, Miss Sparks had quite a different young lady with her, who told us just the same sort of things."

"Yes, my dear"—the voice is the voice of Mrs. Macdonald of Glendrummond, and the dear old lady is making an effort to change the subject, for the air is becoming charged with electricity—"yes, my dear. I always wear them in the evening, wher-

ever I am. Laura said to me before I left home, 'Why don't you take your diamonds to the bank, mother, and then they will be safe while you are away?' But I said, 'My dear Laura, whatever is the use of having pretty things, and keeping them locked up at the bank?' So I always bring my solitaires and a brooch with me, for I like to look as nice at an hotel as I do at home; in fact, there are more people to see one abroad."

"And quite right too, Mrs. Macdonald," responded Mrs. Lambert's slow, pathetic voice, "and I'm sure in a respectable hotel like this, things are quite safe. That's what I'm always telling Henry when he says I oughtn't to keep so many bank notes in my box. But money is so puzzling, I never can understand circular notes, so I have to make Henry send me good Bank of England notes when I want money. He sends me the first halves, and when I have acknowledged them the others follow. I know where I am with bank notes, and Herr Engel is always willing to change them for me."

"Ah, glad enough to get them, I dare say," said Major Roberts.

But here the welcome sound of the dinner bell put an end to conversation, and we all trooped into the "salle-à-manger."

I sat opposite Mrs. Trefusis, and looked with some interest at the new arrivals. They were two young Englishmen, one looking the picture of health and good temper—it was he who was next to Mrs. Trefusis—while the other, I imagined, must be rather an invalid, for he scarcely ate anything, although his neighbour did his best to coax him to try the various dishes as they came round. Mrs. Trefusis maintained a dignified demeanour, and only responded in the most distant manner to the young fellow's advances. I suppose he saw the lady was not disposed to be friendly, for he made very few attempts at conversation, and contented himself with such unobtrusive attentions as passing the salt.

Now Mrs. Trefusis is by nature of a companionable disposition, and I felt sure she would not long hold to her resolution.

"You ought to try this sauce, Mrs. Blake. You really are making a great mistake in passing it. You can put it on the side of your plate, and then, if you don't like it, you are not obliged to eat it," remarked Mrs. Macdonald in a very audible voice to her "vis-à-vis."

I saw the cheerful young Englishman

begin to quiver all over, and then, somehow, Mrs. Trefusis smiled, and behold! the foes were friends.

"Dear old lady! she is always giving elementary instruction," said she who had sworn to hold no communication with the new arrivals. "No one but a born idiot would be the better for her advice, but we all accept it gratefully. I suppose because we don't exactly know how to help ourselves. We can't so much as eat an orange without being told that our way of peeling it is wrong!"

The ice was broken, and after this the two got on famously. Mrs. Trefusis posted her neighbour up in all matters relating to the hotel; and he, in turn, gave her much information about himself and his friend.

"So the young gambler from Monte Carlo proved agreeable company after all," said Miss Sparks, as she passed Mrs. Trefusis on her way to her evening game of *bézique* with the long-suffering companion.

"Very superior to some of the visitors!" replied Mrs. Trefusis promptly, and then she turned to me. "I really am very sorry I talked so stupidly. They are a couple of as nice young fellows as I have ever seen. Mr. Benson is here to look after his friend, Mr. Harley, whose health has broken down from overwork. He is a famous public singer, and has been ordered to give his voice complete rest for three months. It is most unfortunate for him, because he has had the offer of several good professional engagements in London, which he has been obliged to refuse."

"Harley, Harley," murmured Miss Sparks, "I don't remember ever having heard of any distinguished singer of that name."

"Of course he has a stage name," replied Mrs. Trefusis loftily. "I will ask Mr. Benson what it is."

At that moment the gentleman spoken of entered the saloon, and advanced to the only lady whose acquaintance he had yet made.

"What do you generally do in the evenings?" he asked genially. "Nothing? Good gracious, that is very dull! Surely we can have some music. Don't you sing, Mrs. Trefusis? A little? Oh, that's all right; and I'm sure there must be others who can do likewise. I only wish Harley were strong enough to stay downstairs and give us a song or two, but he has got to go up and lie down for an hour after dinner. However, as he gets stronger we may hope for a little help from him, and till that time

comes we must do the best we can. I can strum on the banjo a little myself. I wouldn't do it if Jack were here to jeer at my feeble efforts; but if you won't tell, I will accompany any young lady who will give us a song, provided it isn't very classical."

After this our evenings became quite festive; and we all—with the possible exception of Miss Sparks, who resolutely played *bézique* with Miss Long—declared that Mr. Bob Benson was the life of the party. He turned out to be a very fair musician, and got up concerts and entertainments of various sorts every evening. "What, running away, Mrs. Macdonald?" we would hear him saying reproachfully. "Nonsense, we can't spare you from the audience; you always applaud so kindly. Don't you know we are going to act some charades, and you really must patronise us? Letters? Oh, come now, Mrs. Macdonald, you know you write letters all the afternoon, and you can't want to write them all the evening too! Besides, Jack is feeling so much better that he hopes to come down when he has had a little rest, and I really don't think it will hurt him to give us one song. Do you know he is ever so much better for his stay at St. Antoine. It is a great pity we can't stay much longer, but Jack's mother is going to Mentone in a week or two, and then we shall have to move on and join her. I'm sure I shall be sorry enough to leave this place, you have all been so good to me. Look here! Let's organise a little excursion in honour of Jack's recovery. It is positively disgraceful; we are none of us seeing any of the lions of the neighbourhood. I vote we all go to the Islands one day. We just go to Cannes by train, you know, and the boat service across is very good. I'm sure Herr Engel will pack us up a good lunch, and we will get back in time to write the usual letters before dinner. What do you say, Miss Sparks? Don't you think we could manage it?"

I fancy Miss Sparks struggled between a desire to say "no" and a wish to see the Islands, with some one else to have the trouble of arranging the excursion. In the end the latter feeling triumphed, and she said "she should be happy to join the party," and that "Miss Long could attend to such correspondence as was absolutely needful that afternoon." I don't know how Mr. Benson managed, but he somehow contrived that no one should be left out of any amusement that he planned, and it soon

got to be understood that Miss Long was not to be left at home.

The charades were a great success, and Mr. Harley actually spent a short time in the salon that evening. However, we didn't get the promised song, though the invalid really seemed very fairly well and strong, and entered heartily into the idea of a visit to the Islands, which was fixed for the next day but one. Mr. Benson proved a capital cicerone. He went to the station, and got the officials to reserve carriages for our party. He attended carefully to the commissariat department—including the transport service—and when Thursday came, with perfect weather, even John Gilpin's "six precious souls" were not more "agog" for their jaunt than we were for ours. Only one contretemps threatened to mar our enjoyment.

"I must rush upstairs and stir up that lazy Jack," said Mr. Benson, after we had waited a few minutes for his friend. Up he went, whistling gaily, but soon returned with a serious look on his usually cheerful countenance.

"I don't know what to do," he said. "Jack felt awfully faint just as he was getting ready, and it is quite impossible he can go, though he is feeling better now. I don't like to leave him. Do you think you can manage without me?"

"Certainly not," replied Miss Sparks with decision. "You have made all the arrangements, Mr. Benson, and none of us have even tried to understand them, not expecting it to be necessary. Surely Mr. Harley cannot be so selfish—"

"You don't know Jack, Miss Sparks, if that is what you think of him! On the contrary, he insists upon the programme being carried out. It is only that I don't feel comfortable at the idea of his being alone. However, he is better, and has promised to send for the doctor if he has another attack; and, after all, we shall be back by five, so I think I'll risk it."

So off we went at last; and, once clear of the hotel, Mr. Benson seemed to dismiss the subject of his friend's illness from his mind, and was, as usual, the life of the party. Sometimes, it is true, there was an absent expression on his face, but he did not suffer his anxieties to spoil our pleasure. We strolled about the pretty island; had a lively al-fresco lunch; read up in our guide-books the story of the imprisonment of the Man in the Iron Mask, and Marshal Bazaine's escape; and unanimously offered

a vote of thanks to the originator and organiser of the expedition.

"It seems quite a pity to return to St. Antoine so soon," said Mrs. Trefusis. "Couldn't we wait for the next train, Mr. Benson?"

"Certainly," replied that gentleman courteously, "if you will kindly excuse my leaving. You see, Jack is on my mind—"

But we would not hear of parting with our guide, so the programme was faithfully carried out to the end.

As we entered the hotel, the manager advanced and put a note into Mr. Benson's hand.

"The other gentleman has gone; but he said the writing would explain," said he politely.

"Gone. What on earth do you mean?" gasped our young friend, looking too bewildered to open the letter.

"The writing will explain," repeated the manager.

"If you will read the note, there might be some chance of understanding the matter," suggested Miss Sparks.

Mr. Benson tore the letter open, and read it aloud:

"DEAR OLD BOY,—After you left, I had a telegram from my mother, saying she had reached Mentone, and asking me to join her at once; so I packed up immediately—your things as well as mine—paid the bill, and was off by half-past three. I know you mean to be back by five o'clock, so you will have time to catch the five-twenty and join us to-night. Please say good-bye for me to all our kind friends, and explain matters to them."

Loud were our lamentations when we realised that the life of the party was taking his departure thus abruptly. In a few minutes the leave-taking was over, and the companion to whom we owed so much pleasure had vanished from our midst. We all stayed in the hall bewailing our hard fate, and congratulating ourselves that we had at least accomplished our excursion before the blow fell, until we had only a few minutes left in which to make ourselves tidy for dinner. The bell sounded, and we gradually reassembled, but not with our usual punctuality.

"What has become of Mrs. Macdonald?" asked Mrs. Lambert.

As she spoke the old lady came hastily in. "There have been thieves in the hotel," she exclaimed; "my diamonds are gone!"

There was a horrified silence. Then :  
 "I never did like that young man," said Miss Sparks grimly.

"Whatever do you mean?" exclaimed Mrs. Trefusis. "You surely don't suggest that Mr. Benson is the thief! Why, he was with us all day, as much as you were yourself."

"Kept us all out of the way while his confederate ransacked our drawers and boxes. Oh, what fools we have been!"

Well, we wouldn't believe it at first; but when we found that the bill of "the life of the party" had actually been paid with one of Mrs. Lambert's bank notes and that the obliging manager had kindly changed the others into gold for Mr Harley we were obliged to relinquish our faith.

Yes; that charming Mr. Benson had kept us all entertained downstairs in the evenings, while Mr. Harley fitted keys to our locks; and when all was ready for the "coup," he succeeded in carrying us off for the day, leaving a clear stage (as was becoming) for the famous public singer. When the performance was over, he, too, took his departure, whither I know not; but we were assured by the police it was not to Mentone.

#### AT THE BAYREUTH FESTIVAL.

"WHY, X., what on earth brings you to Bayreuth?" said a musical friend to me as we met, on the Sunday morning after our arrival, in the spacious alley of the Hofgarten, where the band of the First Uhlans was discoursing excellent sweet music to an appreciative concourse of all nations. The question had, or seemed to have, its justification in the fact that, in the technical sense of the word, I am not in the least degree musical, and students or connoisseurs of music are prone to assume that for uncultivated ears such as mine the Wagnerian opera can be naught but vanity and vexation of spirit. Indeed, I am inclined to think that, had they but the power, they would exclude us altogether from their holy ground, as persons unworthy to share the high mysteries of their cult. "*Procul o procul este profani*," are the words which the true Wagnerian would fain have inscribed on all the approaches to his shrine.

And yet, though I should make but a sorry show in a musical examination, the Bayreuth week is, and will always be to me, one of my most delightful memories,

and I venture to hope that a short account of it from my unmusical point of view may not be without its encouragement for others as ignorant as myself.

In the first place, let me remind my readers that though music is the dominant instrument of the Wagnerian drama, it is by no means so dominant as to exclude others from a position of very high importance. The appeal of Italian opera is solely to the ear, and through the ear to the emotions—the appeal of the Wagnerian drama is to the whole man; to the sight no less than to the hearing; to the sense of strong poetic diction no less than to the sense for intricate musical phrasing; to the intellectual and ethical, no less than to the æsthetic faculties. It is the attempt to combine and weave into one glowing and palpitating whole the strongest impulses and the subtlest suggestions of music, and all the sweetness and power of lyric and heroic speech; to clothe the soul thus called into being with all exquisite harmonies of form and colour; to present it with all the melody of graceful and gracious gesture, amid the mighty ebb and flow of rhythmically moving masses; and to set the whole against a background of nature as we see it in its light and shade, in its repose and movement, at those supreme moments when ideal truth and beauty meet, and all the world is pulsating in its utmost arteries to the heartbeats of our own emotion.

In a word, the Wagnerian drama is the attempt to utter the mysteries of life, and not human life alone, but the life of all the animate and inanimate world, in the highest spiritual language known to man—the language of complex orchestral harmony. It is an attempt to achieve something far greater than the ordinary drama alone, or the ordinary opera alone, even pretends to aim at; and just because of this many-sidedness, even the most musically ignorant, if only he bring with him some true sense of poetic feeling, is thrilled and permeated by the mighty effect of the whole—nay, finds that while for the musically learned the music interprets the living, moving pictures of the stage, for him the perfectness of the stage pictures opens the ear to the understanding of the music, and gives him a new sense of that mystic tongue to which hitherto, perchance, he has been as one born deaf.

The themes of "Lohengrin" and "Tannhäuser," our first two plays at Bayreuth, are too well known to the majority at least of



those who are interested in the Wagnerian drama to justify me in reproducing them. But however often we may have heard them elsewhere, they come to us here with entirely new solemnity and power. From the moment when the last trumpet-peal proclaims the closing of the theatre doors, and the deep "Bayreuth hush" falls upon the vast throng which rises tier upon tier in the darkness of the mighty hall, a sense of awe and mystery creeps into our hearts. The feeling deepens as from the invisible orchestra the first notes of the overture float upwards like some spiritual exhalation, some voice from the innermost heart of things speaking to us in tones which range from the first low lilt of half-awakened birds in the early dawn, to the thunder and crash and reverberant echoes of storm amid the Alpine heights. The invisible music seems indeed as the utterance of our own souls as they pass through all the varied scale of feeling to the moment of confused and agitated expectation when the great curtain parts, and our own agitation and expectancy seem mirrored for us on the stage in the swaying throng of nobles gathered to meet Henry the Fowler beneath the oak of justice in the meadows of fair Brabant. To the musically unlearned I am inclined to think that the greatest wonder and delight of Wagner's orchestration is the strange and subtle manner in which it gives rhythmic voice not only to the passion and feeling of the individual soul, but to the feelings and impulses and even to the physical movements of great masses of men. In ordinary opera the physical movement and orchestration seem to me but accidentally combined. Here I feel them to be the two sides of an organic whole. All through the trying scene of Friedrich of Telramund's accusation, and Elsa's appeal to her unknown champion, there is not a movement of the crowd which fills all the middle distance of the stage—and it is a living, feeling crowd of real men and women that we have before us, not a mere waiting mass of chorus singers—there is not a movement, a stir, a wave of feeling which passes through this crowd, even down to the half-articulate sigh which breaks from it when the third trumpet-blast dies away and no champion appears, which is not taken up and etherealised and consecrated by the invisible music, and set for ever in its right place in the glorious jewel-spangled robe of art which the poet-musician is weaving as it were before our eyes. And when at last, amid the outburst of strong,

joyous harmony, intoxicating as wine, the great mass sweeps forward as an irresistible wave, and, circling round the victorious Lohengrin and his rescued bride, bears them aloft on upraised shields, and the curtain falls on the tumult of their joy, we feel as if we had assisted not at some counterfeit presentment of a tale, but at the unfolding and upgrowing of an actual piece of quivering, palpitating life, interpreted and ennobled by the ideal voice of the most transcendent art.

In "Tannhäuser," side by side with this marvellous interpretation of human life in all the range of its emotions and the intricate complexity of its relations, we have the no less subtle interpretation of the myriad voices in which the Soul of Nature utters itself to our own.

As the mists of the Venusberg clear away, and the fair Thuringian valley unfolds itself, cradled in its beech-woods of tenderest green, and climbing through undulations of smiling meadow and wooded upland to the towers of the distant Wartburg, the very voice of Springtide gladness seems to breathe for us in the piping of the shepherd lad on the crag above the mountain path; the very trees and flowers, and even the moss-grown rocks themselves, to whisper the accompaniment to his song:

Der Mai, der Mai war kommen.

Der Mai ist da, der liebe Mai.

Yet it is characteristic of Wagner that this strain of sweet natural, almost purely physical joy in the warmth and the sunlight, and the new life breaking on the earth, is caught up into and inwoven with the deeper strain of the pilgrims' song, and that that too, the song of awe and mystery, and consciousness of fall and failure lifted out of itself by a larger faith and hope, is felt to be part of the great earth life with which tree and flower and rock are in sympathy, and that so the two, the shepherd's song and the pilgrims' hymn, float into one another and interlace and complete each the other as they linger and fade and die away among the distant pathways of the hills, into the sweet silence of the woodland from which they came, and back to which they go, leaving it the richer for their passing.

As I walked next day under the great limes and chestnuts of the Hofgarten, as I passed from thence to stand by the great musician's grave beneath the whispering beeches, I felt as one in whom a new power had been born of understanding the voices

of the air, and of the sunlight, and of the murmuring trees. All Nature seemed to be whispering to me her secrets in the tongue which none may interpret save for himself, and the peace and joy even amid all the tumult and suffering of life which breathed from that spring scene in "Tannhäuser" rested on my soul like a benediction.

I would fain linger over this play, fain tell of the wondrously natural gathering together of the hunting crowd in the glade, of the audience on the Wartburg, so utterly different in its natural life and movement to the ordinary gathering of a stage crowd, so marvellously defined and accentuated by the chiaroscuro of the orchestration. I would fain attempt to paint in words the change that autumn has made in the Thuringian valley when the curtain parts for the closing act, and the almost incredibly true and beautiful transition from evening to night, and from night to the dawn of the bright new day. I would fain strive to trace the deep harmonies of this changing scene no less with Elisabeth's selfless cry of resignation than with the halleluias of the returning pilgrims and the great message of pardon and peace with which the majestic drama closes, but these things readers in England can in some sort imagine for themselves—and I have left myself but scant space to speak of Bayreuth's special privilege and pride, the "Parsifal," which was the last great work of Wagner's life, and which may not be given elsewhere than amid the surroundings of the Bayreuth Festival.

The story of "Parsifal" is composed of a strange weaving together of ancient legends—the legend of the Grail, the legend of the Holy Spear, the legend of the Round Table, and the legend of the Wandering Jew. "Lohengrin" has already made us familiar with the conception of the brotherhood of Spotless Knights, who in the Castle of Monsalvat guard the sacred treasure of the Grail, the chalice from which the Saviour drank at His last Supper, the chalice which received His blood as He hung upon the cross. We have already seen Lohengrin himself come forth as the knight of the Grail to redress human wrongs, and return to the mystic land from whence he came. In "Parsifal" we are ourselves transported to the domain of Monsalvat, and from the dialogue of the old knight Gurnemanz and his attendants we learn that the knights of the Grail have fallen on evil days. Amfortas, their King, has been beguiled by the arts of the magician Klingsor and the

witchery of a woman "fearsome fair" into sin, which has robbed the brotherhood of that Holy Spear which pierced the Saviour's side, and has left Amfortas himself suffering in body from a wound which naught can heal, tortured in soul with unavailing shame and remorse. In vain his knights scour the world for medicine to heal his sickness; in vain does Kundry, the wild woman who serves unbidden as the messenger of the brotherhood, and will take no thanks or praise for her service, bring balm from the depths of Arabia. As Amfortas passes in his litter to bathe in the sacred lake, we realise that he bears with him the double wound which no balm can heal. Naught can avail to restore him but the touch of the Holy Spear, and the spear, alas! is in Klingsor's power. But one hope remains. A voice of comfort has come from the Grail itself, bidding them wait the coming of "the spotless fool, through pity wise," who is the chosen instrument of salvation. Scarce are the words uttered when an angry body of knights and attendants enter, dragging in the boy Parsifal who has polluted the sacred land by killing a wild swan of the lake. The boy, a wild child of nature reared in the woods, is too thoughtless to understand his crime until Gurnemanz appeals to his pity for the dying creature; then with a passionate gesture he lings aside bow and arrows, and pressing his hand over his eyes, bursts into bitter tears. A thrill of hope passes through Gurnemanz's heart and ours, that this guileless fool, whose heart is ready to melt in pity, may be the appointed deliverer: but the deliverance is not yet. In vain does Gurnemanz convey him through pathless ways, symbolised by the slow shifting of the scene, into the Hall of the Grail, and there show him the passionate intensity of Amfortas's suffering, as he, the one sinner, is compelled to act as the minister of the Grail, and to raise the chalice glowing with the light of heaven in benediction over his sinless brethren. Parsifal remains dazed and without understanding, and with an impatient sneer at his folly, Gurnemanz thrusts him forth into the night. It is only when in Klingsor's magic gardens Kundry, the sinner who mocked the Saviour's pain, and is doomed to live till she meets one who can redeem her—Kundry, the penitent messenger of the Grail, compelled by Klingsor to assume the form of a woman "fearsome fair" and do his bidding—tempts him as she tempted Amfortas, that the remembrance of the King's agony comes

to him as a revelation of pity, and steels his heart against the tempter. Henceforth he has proved himself "the spotless fool, through pity wise," and though his recovery of the Holy Spear from Klingsor's now powerless hand is not followed at once by the redemption of Amfortas and Kundry, we know that this redemption will be the culminating point of the play. And so it proves. After long wandering, Parsifal finds once again the land of the Grail. Habited by Gurnemanz in the robes of the order, and anointed King of the brotherhood, he exercises his royal priesthood by pouring the water of baptism on Kundry's head—and then passes with Gurnemanz once more to the Hall of the Grail, where the touch of the Spear brings healing to Amfortas. What words can paint the beauty, the splendour, the awful majesty of that last scene in which Parsifal raises the flashing cup of the Grail over the prostrate mass of worshippers, while from the dome above the dove floats down in a flood of unearthly glory? What language can even dimly shadow forth the exaltation of the throbbing harmonies that surge and swell about his figure until they break at last into a song of triumph, such as only the angels are worthy to understand? It must be seen, it must be heard, or it cannot be believed. And once seen, once heard, it remains in the soul and in the memory for ever—a glory, and a joy, and an inspiration!

## BEWITCHED.

A STORY IN EIGHT PARTS.

### PART III.

ALICE stood before her looking-glass, and contemplated her reflection with a countenance puckered by dissatisfaction. "It is bad enough here with three or four candles," she said. "It will be hideous in the glare of the ballroom."

The pink evening dress was pretty and well-fitting, and tolerably modern, and in tolerable repair, and she had once decided it would do. No one would expect her to be in a new dress just before her wedding. But now it struck her altogether in a new light. "It is old-fashioned and dirty," she settled. "I look a fright. Arthur will be ashamed of me. I don't care what Aunt Robina says. I will put on the white."

She had not much time to effect the transformation, for Miss Downing called presently: "Alice, make haste. The man has two more houses to call at."

So, of course, there was no time to send her upstairs to change again when she appeared before her horrified aunt in all the glory of her very best new ball-dress; a lovely combination of silk, lace, and chiffon, all of purest white.

"I really wonder you didn't put on your wedding-dress when you were about it," said Miss Downing.

"It has to go back. It doesn't quite fit," said Alice carelessly. She was radiant with joy in her beauty, and hope of its triumph. She would not have acknowledged why she was so anxious to appear very fair to-night; what conquest she had in view. She was not jealous; she trusted fully in Arthur's love. She would have scorned any suggestion that, under any circumstances, he could have admired Miss Boyd more than herself. But she remembered how the enemy had once found her at her worst and weakest, and routed her; and she was determined on meeting her to-night armed at all points. In one point, indeed, she fell provokingly short: she had no flowers. Arthur had written to Covent Garden for a bouquet, but it had not arrived. The flowers might have freshened the old dress up, at any rate, sufficiently to win approbation from a man's eyes. Arthur was but a man and susceptible to feminine dress effects, and she was but a woman, and suffered from shabby and unbecoming clothing in spite of her youth and prettiness. As for caring about ill-luck—why, the only way ill-luck could be brought about would be by looking less pretty and bright than other girls.

The ball was given by Lady Strange in honour of her only daughter's coming of age, so it was a point of courtesy to attend it, besides giving an opportunity of meeting Arthur. He was waiting for them when they arrived, looking rather worn and fagged, but with Alice's carnations in his button-hole. He had been very nice these last ten days. He had been working hard at Kilmeny, but not too hard, until quite lately, to give many happy hours to his betrothed. To-day she had not seen him until now, as he expected by dint of close work to finish Kilmeny by the end of the week, and pack her off to the winter exhibition for which she was destined.

"I am so sorry," said Alice immediately. "The flowers have not come."

"Flowers? Oh, yes—I remember. I sent them to you," he answered, brightening after a puzzled pause. "The people addressed them to me, and I sent Thomas on

with them to you, as I was desperately busy in the agonies of finishing."

"Finishing? Is Kilmeny finished?"

"Finished and despatched—an enormous weight off my mind. And now I can give the whole of it to my dearest, and enjoy this evening with her, and all the next twelve days."

"Arthur, why did you send the picture away without telling me?" she asked.

"You know how awfully I wanted to see her."

"Darling, how awfully stupid of me!" he cried, in sincere penitence. "I never thought. I could think of nothing but the picture. A sort of divine fury possessed me, swallowed me up, or I could not have finished her so soon. It was as if my mind and fingers worked on of themselves—rushed ahead of me. I can neither eat nor think when these waves of inspiration come over me."

"Is it not very bad for you, dear? You will have brain fever if you go on; you looked so white and harassed just now at the door."

"It would be bad if it lasted for ever," he said cheerfully, "but it doesn't—only for occasional days or hours, and I must seize every moment while it lasts. Then I take long rests between—perfect rests. I shall do nothing now until after our honeymoon."

Alice looked at him admiringly, not anxiously. 'Colour had come back to his face, and peace to his eyes. He looked so handsome, so refined and high-souled in his rather delicate beauty, so far beyond all the other men in the room. How much grander it was to be loved by a real artist, visited by these divine floods of inspiration, than by a man who was always level-spirited, and of the earth earthy. She might be level herself, but she admired nothing less in men. Of course her own level sense was just what Arthur required to keep him balanced and anchored to earth. It would never do if he were to be carried away to some third heaven and stay there. But she was very sorry he had forgotten how much she would have liked to see the perfect Kilmeny, though of course it was delightful to know that it was off his mind so much sooner than he had expected, and that she could have his undivided attention for these last days of loverhood.

It was a great old castle they had come to, with miles of stair and corridor, and acres of reception room. Miss Downing walked up the wide staircase before them

while this conversation went on. Lady Strange; her son, Sir Hugh; and her daughter, Agatha; awaited their guests at a door opening upon the gallery. The rooms were a blaze of light, and crowded by gaily dressed women and men, a good many of whom were in hunt dress or uniform. Agatha Strange was greatly distinguished in the hunting field, and had requested that her ball should be a sort of Hunt ball, which heightened the picturesque effect. Dick Freeland, in the scarlet and black of the Pyncholk Hunt, greeted Alice while they were waiting until arrivals in front had been received by the hostess.

"Thank you so much for the lovely flowers, Mr. Knollys," said a voice close behind them.

Alice turned, astonished, from Mr. Freeland's courtesies. There stood Miss Boyd, blazing in scarlet and diamonds, holding in her hands the very shower-bouquet of white roses which Alice had been waiting for all that weary afternoon: white roses mixed with pink carnations to match her pink dress, and which did not "go" at all with scarlet satin.

She looked quickly at Arthur. Her amazement was almost nothing to his apparent confusion, which of course must be due to the inconvenient betrayal of his faithlessness in the presence of the rightful owner of the flowers and of his attentions.

"I—I am afraid," he stammered, but just then Lady Strange shook hands with Miss Downing, and was looking for the rest of her party, and Alice was compelled to pass on. She had dropped Arthur's arm, but he followed her to shake hands with Lady Strange. He had simply followed for explanation, regardless of Miss Boyd's feelings and opinion of his manners.

"I never sent her the flowers," he muttered in Alice's ears. "They have been sent to her by mistake. It is awfully awkward. I cannot take them from her and give them to you."

"Mr. Knollys," said the hateful voice again, "I hope there was no mistake about the flowers. They were addressed to you at the 'Red Lion,' and readdressed, I supposed, by you to me. Had it been a verbal message, there might have been a mistake. Of course, I do not know your handwriting. The man left them with your compliments, and said you were sorry you were too busy to bring them yourself."

Poor Arthur was nearly crazy between annoyance with the woman for making a scene, misery at the anger in Alice's face,



and rage at the amusement in Dick Freeland's; all the muddle increased by the impossibility of explaining the matter in a way to save everybody's feelings all round.

"Perhaps these flowers belong to you, Miss à Court," said Lydia Boyd, holding them out.

"Oh, no," and "Please keep them," said Alice and Arthur simultaneously, dreading to attract further listeners. Then Alice walked off with Dick Freeland, and left Arthur to make the best he could of the situation.

She danced with Dick almost unconsciously. She was engaged for that dance to Arthur, and Dick had not asked her. They joined the dancers simply to get out of a disagreeable imbroglio. When it was over, Alice asked Dick to take her back to her aunt. She didn't want refreshment. She wanted to go home, if Miss Downing would allow it.

Miss Downing was sitting with Mrs. Waterton on a red sofa against the wall. As soon as Alice saw that, she shrank back and said: "Not there, please. The other way."

Dick was not a very brilliant young man, but he could not help understanding, having heard the whole incident. Neither was he usually supposed to be blessed with tact. But he had a very kind heart, which does, as a rule, much better.

"Awkward business, that about the flowers," he said, laughing. "His servant's mistake, of course, and poor Knollys suffers. I don't envy him trying to flounder out of it. It must be uncommonly disagreeable to have to tell a girl he had never dreamt of sending her the flowers she is so pleased with. Almost as bad as stories you hear of a man proposing to a girl for her sister, and being accepted by the first girl by mistake."

Alice laughed. Of course, that must be the explanation. Miss Boyd should have read the address more carefully. She wished she could see Arthur to hear how he had got out of it. He would, no doubt, be seeking her for the next dance, having missed his own.

"Can you give me another dance?" asked Dick. "The next? You are engaged for this one, I believe."

Alice looked at her card. It was, of course, perfectly blank as yet. She had promised "all the waltzes and galops but three" to Arthur, and began to mark them off. Programmes in the country are not made entirely of round dances, so even that liberal promise left a good many to spare.

"You can have the next Kitchen Lancers," she said, "and waltz ten."

"May I have this waltz, Miss à Court?" asked another youth.

Alice was on the point of repeating that she was engaged, having marked that waltz off, when she saw Arthur and Miss Boyd crossing the room together. She placed her hand abruptly on his arm, forgetting even to bow dismissal to Dick, and disregarding his expostulatory, "Why, you said—" she walked off with her new cavalier, and made six engagements on the way to the circle of dancers.

The last bars were hardly played out when Arthur touched her arm.

"You will dance the next with me, Alice. Come and have an ice."

"Thanks, Mr. Wynne will get me one. I am engaged for the next," she said coolly.

It was quite easy to do it with Harry Wynne for an audience.

"The one after, then?"

"I have nothing until nine," she said.

"Nine is a quadrille. Give me ten."

"I am engaged for ten and eleven. You can have twelve."

"I will have nine. We need not dance it."

She wrote his name down as carefully as if she might forget it. A little cross did duty for him all down the card if he had known, though in eight places it was almost obliterated by other people's names. Then she turned with a smile to her partner, and suggested that the room was very hot.

Arthur stood back in the crowd, and watched her silently. What could she mean by such conduct? She could not really believe that it was his fault that Miss Boyd had come by the flowers. It was preposterous that she should treat him so; keep him waiting until number nine—a quadrille! He was glad it would be a quadrille. There would be time to get things put straight in some sheltered nook while the quadrille was going on; but it was a far cry to number nine.

He did not ask any one else to dance. He knew very few of the people. He propped himself against a doorpost, and absently watched the crowd while he thought over the foolish little quarrel. He was wedged into his place by the people, as they passed between the rooms; truly "alone in a crowd," for not a creature who knew him was near in sight. He could muse to his heart's content on the vanity of life as it passed before his eyes. He was really

almost asleep on his feet. He was quite worn out with the labour, and confinement, and excitement of finishing his picture. He had worked almost without breathing space every hour of the last four days, as days are counted by the sun. His sleep had been his work done over and over again; only for the waking joy of success, of delight in progress, of eager hope, there was despair. He could never finish the picture. Kilmeny kept evading him. The face would come out under his hand anybody's but Kilmeny's. Sometimes Miss Downing's; sometimes that of one of his London models; sometimes a face out of somebody else's picture. Millais's Jersey Lily, Mrs. Hammersley, Watts's Hope, Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth; very often Miss Boyd's, with strange differences; never the ideal Kilmeny's, and never Alice's. So morning found him unrested, but feverishly awake and eager for work. And now it was done, and he wanted to enjoy himself—and here was Alice spoiling all his well-earned holiday by pretending to believe he could have sent her flowers to Miss Boyd!

Suddenly he was aroused from his semi-somnolence by hearing her name.

"How beautiful Alice à Court looks to-night; quite bridal in that lovely dress; and so very happy!"

He looked round at once to seek her. If she looked so happy she could not be very angry with him.

She went past at a little distance with Dick Freeland. Their dance was just over. Chance had cleared a space beside them, and for the moment Arthur could see her white figure at full length. She was laughing at something Dick was saying. She looked radiantly beautiful. Arthur allowed none of it to the credit of the smartest gown she had ever worn in her life. Manlike, he had not the least idea what her dress was, except that it was "something white." He only recognised the effect; and, tired as he was, a perfect storm of passionate longing seized him to snatch her from Freeland, from all the world, and take her to himself alone. What business was her beauty of any other man? She was his; it was his. He could not bear that they should rob him of so much as could fill the eye.

Another voice spoke; one that was familiar; sharp and elderly:

"Yes, she looks very well to-night. She was quite bent on coming. Poor thing, she wanted to have one more happy night, she said, before she settled down to marriage."

Arthur could have sprung forward in

wrath, had he been able to move a limb. His back being against the doorpost, there was a compact mass of black-coated humanity before him, forced back by the pressure of dancers passing to the refreshment room. He could not even indicate his presence to the speakers, who were keeping out of the draught behind the doorpost and looped-back curtain.

"But she is quite happy in her engagement!" said the other voice interrogatively. He did not quite recognise it at first.

"I suppose so, poor child," said Miss Downing compassionately. "Of course I should have preferred Mr. Freeland for her. She would be much happier in a country life, and artists are so unreliable—not only in their means but in their temper."

This really was very hard to bear. Truly listeners never hear good of themselves. Arthur believed himself to be such a good-tempered fellow.

"There are many things to put up with in the artistic temperament besides temper," said Mrs. Waterton. "It is well that Alice is so good-tempered. Many girls would have been very angry indeed with a lover who sent a bouquet to another girl."

"But of course that was a mistake," said Miss Downing with dignity, though she knew nothing of the matter but what she had half overheard on the stairs. "The flowers were really ordered for Alice."

"I saw the box come," said Mrs. Waterton. "It was readdressed to Miss Boyd, or I should not have taken it in. I suppose he must have ordered two bouquets, and only one turned up from the florist's. It was tiresome, of course, and most unpleasant for poor Lydia."

"Why on earth should he order flowers for Miss Boyd whom he barely knows?"

"I don't know about barely knowing. They were a whole afternoon together on Tuesday week, pretending to pose for pictures in the old schoolroom—to get a north light, they said. I don't know when he would have torn himself away if I hadn't had to give him a hint. We had people coming to dinner, and I couldn't ask him to stay, as he would have thrown my couples wrong."

"It is all a matter of business with him," said Miss Downing frigidly. "You haven't told me yet how your new cook answers for a big dinner?"

Here opportunity came to move out of durance. What a wicked old woman! What a tissue of fabrications! What if Miss Downing, who did not want him to

marry Alice, should repeat them, too, in hope of breaking off their engagement? Alice, too, had recently developed a quite unexpected capacity for jealousy. Well, he would be jealous too, and with very much better reason. What did she mean by dancing off with Freeland and all those other fellows, and throwing all his promised waltzes over? Then, blessed sound! he heard somebody mention supper, and observed a distinct movement in a new direction. Alice was engaged to go in to supper with him; an engagement that took precedence of all others. He must find her at once. He set off on that quest, crossing the ballroom to his right. At the same moment, Miss Downing, behind the portière on his left, turned to look for some chance squire to take her to supper, and beheld Alice standing quite alone, and looking pale and scared. "She has heard!" thought her aunt in consternation.

"What are you doing there? Why are you alone?" she asked sharply.

"Mr. Freeland had to take a married lady to supper, so of course he brought me to you," she said nervously. "Let us go home; I am so tired."

"Home already!" cried Aunt Robina, who wanted her supper badly. "I should think not. Where is Arthur? Why are you not going in with him?"

"I think I see him over there with Lydia," said Mrs. Waterton, peering through her long eyeglass. "That is her scarlet dress, I am quite sure."

It never entered Alice's head that he might be asking Miss Boyd if she had met Miss à Court anywhere. She was sure he must be asking her to go in to supper. Had he not danced with her first of all, besides sending her the flowers?

"Miss à Court, may I have the pleasure of taking you to supper—if you are not engaged?"

The hesitation was too exasperatingly significant.

"Oh dear, no, I am not," said Alice, stung into a certainty she had not really felt after all.

Miss Downing started, and Mrs. Waterton stared, while Alice walked off with a young Sandys.

"She does not care to give all the evening to Arthur," said Miss Downing unconvincedly. "She will have enough of him soon, for the rest of her life. She dislikes being set on the shelf as an engaged girl."

Alice could not eat much supper, all her

senses being strained to see or hear Arthur with Miss Boyd, but they did not come into the room. She felt as if she were in a dream. Nothing had been so real in life as her engagement, and now it seemed to have vanished into thin air. She had lost Arthur; Lydia Boyd had stolen him from her. She was too much crushed by the stern weight of evidence to resist it. It made up a quite irresistible amount of fact. She did not think of appealing against it, much less to ask for explanation of what seemed all too plain. She could only think one thought. she was no longer the girl engaged to Arthur Knollys, and going to be married in three weeks' time. She was somebody quite different.

Supper seemed to last an interminable time, but it did come to an end. She felt strange and giddy when she rose to her feet. Young Sandys looked at her with concern.

"You are not well," he said. "You really should have eaten something, you had nothing at all. Let me give you a glass of wine."

"No, take me into the air," she gasped.

He made her drink some water, and then took her out upon a terrace. It was too cold. She shivered, and said she had better go home. Would he take her to the cloak-room, and tell her aunt?

He accomplished the first task, but not the second. Miss Downing was at supper. He did not find himself able to return and tell Alice, who had much better come back to the ballroom when she was rested. He had engagements of his own to attend to.

Alice sat by the cloak-room fire very comfortably and peacefully. Nobody was there but a maid. It was so nice and quiet after the crowded rooms. She lay back in a deep chair, too tired to think actively, almost enjoying the giving up of herself to the utter weakness that follows severe agony.

She had sat there quite a long time when a girl rushed in to have her dress mended.

"Please be quick," she said breathlessly. "I am engaged for this—number nine."

Instantly Alice became vividly alive. She, too, was engaged for number nine. Everything became of no importance whatever beside that immense fact. She must manage to slip back to the rooms alone. How should she?

Just outside the door she met her young host, who asked her to dance.

"I am engaged," she said, "but if you would be so kind as take me in——"

He took her in readily, found her a seat, and waited by her side till her partner should claim her. They were quite a conspicuous couple, the only stationary people there. Every one else, reinvigorated by supper, was hurrying to form the quadrilles. Arthur was nowhere to be seen.

"He must be at supper," said Sir Hugh Strange. "We might as well have danced it, but it is too late now. I was engaged to a lady who has gone home. It is much nicer sitting out, though."

"Yes, it is too late. But it is not nice sitting here," she said. "Cannot we go somewhere else?"

"Oh, yes, there are plenty of places. Have you been through the conservatories? They are very pretty just now. Do come. You like flowers, I know."

She went with him through high banks and under groves of tropical blooms and foliage; a paradise of heavy perfume, damp warmth, and softly shaded lamps. Fountains tinkled unseen under ferns and feathery groves, and sparkled among palms and brilliant dropping creepers. In the distance the dance music went on, a soft, measured hum. There were several couples besides themselves in the greenhouses, which were many and spacious. The music died away. Then the couples hurried out to make and keep other engagements. Alice was engaged to Dick Freeland for number ten, but she had

forgotten. She had no longer any lot or share in those joyous frivolities. She felt herself set apart for ever by pain from all that belonged to light and youth.

"We are left quite alone," hinted her companion, who wanted to dance.

"No. There are still some people." She stopped.

The people were in a small conservatory, a mere grove of foliage round a fountain and a seat. Upon the seat were two figures: a lady in scarlet, and a man beside her, looking into her eyes as if he had forgotten all the world beyond them—and such a small thing as his engagement to dance number nine with the rest of it.

"I am afraid we are intruding," said Alice, with a harsh little laugh; "and I am engaged for this dance. We must hurry up."

They met Miss Downing coming from the supper-room. Alice dismissed her escort, and drew her aunt aside.

"I cannot stay another minute. Come home at once. I will tell you why, after. If you don't come now, I will run home all by myself in the dark."

Miss Downing's hard heart could not but be touched with dismay and compassion at that pleading white face, and she had had her supper, and was full of curiosity, and terribly afraid of revelations in public. So she consented to be torn prematurely from the gay and festive throng.

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